



Colonel Kenneth B. Marshall
Superintendent
Ohio State Highway Patrol
660 E. Main Street
Columbus, OH 43205-0037



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

- Administration
- Ohio State Highway Patrol
- Bureau of Motor Vehicles
- Division of Emergency Medical Services
- Emergency Management Agency

March 31, 1997

1COM

The Honorable Reed Hundt, Chair
Federal Communications Center
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

SUNSHINE PERIOD

87-268

RE: MM Docket 87-268

Dear Mr. Hundt:

The Commission is currently considering the adoption of a Digital Television (DTV) channel allotment which would permit the re-allocation to other services of spectrum now reserved for UHF-TV channels 60-69. Both President Clinton and Senator John McCain have proposed that four of those channels (i.e., 24 MHz) be allocated for state and local government public safety use. We strongly support such an allocation, which would be consistent with the recommendations of the Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee ("PSWAC"). Unfortunately, we understand that some members of the broadcasting community have suggested that any re-allocation of the channel 60-69 spectrum should be delayed for several years.

The Commission must not delay any further in addressing public safety spectrum needs. State and local government public safety agencies have been waiting for over ten years for the Commission to address the spectrum needs that the Commission staff itself identified in 1984. More recently, the PSWAC concluded that "unless immediate measures are taken to alleviate spectrum shortfalls and promote interoperability, Public Safety agencies will not be able to adequately discharge their obligations to protect life and property in a safe, efficient and cost effective manner.

The shortage of radio channels became very apparent, when in Ohio, a group of State Public Safety Agencies bid a statewide 800 Mhz system and were informed by vendors we needed to procure an additional forty radio channels to provide adequate radio coverage in all areas of the state. The loading on the system, as bid by the State of Ohio, was minimal with the majority of sites being three channel trunked sites. There were several locations in the state



where no channels were available. This lack of radio channels poses a threat to the safety of the general public and the public safety personnel who respond to incidents in these areas.

The time to act is now, not in two or three years. Every day that the Commission delays is a day that police, fire, EMS and other public safety personnel must face continued frequency congestion, insufficient interoperability and the inability to implement new public safety communications technologies.

The PSWAC Spectrum Requirements Subcommittee concluded that "at least 25 MHz of spectrum should be allocated immediately to alleviate capacity shortfalls for critical voice and data needs and to promote development of equipment for new services". While the PSWAC report also suggested that short term public safety spectrum needs be addressed within five years, the intent was that the spectrum be in use within five years. Prior to that time, the following must take place:

- The FCC must conduct and complete a rule-making to re-allocate the spectrum.
- The FCC must conduct and complete a rule-making to adopt rules for the use and assignment of the re-allocated spectrum.
- Public Safety agencies and organizations must plan and coordinate allotment of channels.
- Equipment vendors must modify or develop equipment to operate in the re-allocated spectrum (while not a major problem due to the proximity to the 800 MHz band, this process still takes time).
- Applications must be filed and processed by the Commission.
- Agencies must fund the development of new systems.
- New systems must be constructed and put into operation.

This process will not be completed overnight. Therefore, the Commission must allocate the spectrum now so that the implementation of that spectrum for public safety purposes can begin as soon as possible.

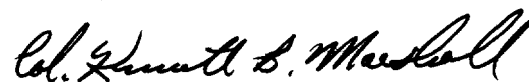
Finally, we also urge the Commission to adopt a DTV channel allotment plan which eliminates, or at least minimizes the number of, interim DTV allotments in channels 60-69

The Honorable Reed Hundt, Chair
March 31, 1997
Page 3

1COM

That would greatly accelerate the ability of public safety to implement new operations with these channels long before the end of the DTV transition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Col. Kenneth B. Marshall".

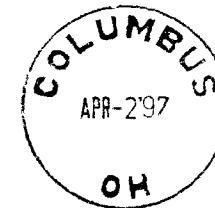
Colonel Kenneth B. Marshall
Superintendent

KBM:TLH:cjm/fcc.doc

STATE OF OHIO
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAY SAFETY
STATE HIGHWAY PATROL
P.O. BOX 7037, STATION E.
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43205-0037

OHP-7151

PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS



U.S. POSTAGE

0.254

H METER 480851

THE HONORABLE REED HUNDT CHAIR
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS CENTER
1919 M STREET NW
WASHINGTON DC 20554

D-4 AUTO

